



CITY OF NEWTON, MASSACHUSETTS

Commission on Disability

MEETING MINUTES

April 8 2013

Setti D. Warren
Mayor

Candace Havens
Director
Planning & Development

Senior Planner Alice
Walkup
Community Development

CD Manager
Anne Marie Belrose

Members Present:

Rob Caruso, Co-Chair
Girard Plante, Co-Chair
Barbara Lischinsky
John Lojek
Rosemary Larking
Jini Fairley
Lucie Chansky
Jane Brown

Advisor:

Sergeant Jay Babcock

Staff Present:

Nicole Tocci, Inspectional Services
Alice Walkup, Senior Planner, Community Development
Anne Marie Belrose, CD Manager

Guests:

Doug Anderson
Cynthia Solarz
Lisa Di Giacomo
Sandra Lingley

Meeting:

Rob Caruso called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

Minutes:

J. Brown made a motion to approve the minutes from the March 11, 2013 meeting and J. Lojek seconded the motion.

CDBG Report:

Curb Cut Improvement Prioritization

A. Walkup presented a memo discussing potential curb cut improvement locations, explaining to Commission members the locations that had been prioritized previously, new locations that had

Members

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been added recently, areas of interest to the City leadership, and locations prioritized by the Commission that were planned for improvements through City funding.

She began by describing locations that already had design work completed, including two locations along Washington Street in Newtonville, and a set of 16 curb cuts and sidewalks in Newton Centre. Commission members asked a variety of questions about the Newton Centre project, including whether new APS units or lighting would be part of the project scope and she said that those items were not planned, but she could pass along that feedback to Bill Paille and Patrick Baxter, of the Transportation Dept., and Eve Tapper, Chief Planner for Current Planning, who are leading the project. Sgt. Babcock asked whether the taxi stand along the green space would be moved, and A. Walkup did not know, but would ask.

R. Caruso brought up that the crosswalk in front of 10 Langley Rd is not in good condition; B. Lischinsky has spoken about this before and says that the stamp is worn out and in need of repair and is problematic, particularly in inclement weather. A. Walkup confirmed that the project scope would include improving the curb cut at 10 Langley Rd.

J. Fairley expressed her concerns about the NWH crosswalks with the rest of the Commission agreeing with her. She says the textile on the crosswalks is not good for people with low vision. The ladder styled lines are preferable, you can feel the texture when crossing. J. Lojek asked who was responsible for the crosswalk project at the hospital, nobody knew off hand and he said he would look into it.

A. Walkup discussed with the Commission the different types of lines painted on crosswalks and as J. Fairley says the texture of the ladder type lines are best for people with low vision. A. Walkup went through their options and showed on the projector screen various options and the cost difference between each, the ladder work being more expensive. Sgt. Babcock explained that thermoplastic works well on new pavement and lasts 3-5 years.

R. Caruso asked if the developers of the Austin St. parking lot will pay for any of the retrofitting down towards Newtonville. J. Lojek says there is a lot of money going towards the parking lot & development itself and he hasn't heard anything that would indicate the developers changing anything towards Newtonville. A. Walkup concurs and says that there is a lot being asked of the developers of this project.

J. Lojek asked about the intersection of Floral & Walnut. He says this might not need to be on the priority list because of the construction and changes O'Haras Restaurant is making.

R. Caruso says Watertown & Chapel is heavily used along with Watertown & Adams, he inquired about the cost of installing APS systems at these locations.

J. Fairley years ago had mentioned that there is no curb cut opening in her neighborhood towards the "T". There was 1 curb cut hastily put in for crossing at Centre to Woodcliffe.

B. Lischinsky says Walnut & Beacon is also in bad condition.

At the suggestion of Commission members, A. Walkup said she would follow up on locations from prior year lists to see if the request for improvements at some residential intersections was still needed, so that the curb cut list can be current.

Newton Centre is a heavy populated area with high traffic pedestrian accidents. The Commission agrees that there should be an APS system installed. A. Walkup will look into the price for installing the APS system and get back to the Commission. A guest to the meeting also brought to point her concerns about Newton Centre and the heavy intersection at the Carroll Center. The Commission tried to eliminate some of her fears by saying that the Carroll Center uses that intersection as a guide to help the residents of the Center cross the intersection.

She revisited the locations the Commission had previously prioritized, and Commission members agreed that the north side Commonwealth and Chestnut could be removed from the list.

R. Caruso made a motion to put \$103,000 of curb cut funds to the project in Newton Centre, to make that project whole and R. Larking seconded the motion with L. Chansky opposed.

L. Chansky made a motion to go to the Traffic Council about the APS installation in Newton Centre where it's most needed and a traffic light, R. Larking seconded the motion.

MAAB Variance:

200 Boylston St., a five story mixed use building, which functions as a supermarket, offices and health club is requesting a variance from the MAAB. In lieu of a dedicated elevator from the at-grade entrance lobby to the third floor club's main floor, they are proposing to use the common base building elevators accessed via the common building lobby. They are also requesting in lieu of an elevator between the third floor club and the pool level one story below, a LU/LA.

Doug Anderson & Cynthia Solarz were present at the meeting to describe the new five story building and to answer questions from the Commission.

They described a LU/LA as a small elevator, the cab dimensions will be 4'x5'. L. Chansky asked if there is a phone in the LU/LA and the answer was yes there is.

R. Caruso asked why there isn't a 2nd stop on the elevator; the answer was because there is no access to pool from there. The pool is basically land locked. The Commission asked if wheelchairs have access to pool and the answer was yes you can bring wheelchairs right to pool. There are railings and stairs to 4' deep pool.

The Commission made a motion to accept the variance to have a LU/LA instead of an elevator.

HP Fines & Tickets

Sgt. Babcock gave a prognosis on the operation of HP ticketing. Outside normal violations, 9 stings = \$14,000. The HP stings have been delayed for now. The Police Department will be conducting a 8 week crosswalk sting during the summer. He has explained the operations to Candace Havens, the Director of Planning & Development. It is in the city's hands now to get the ball rolling on an ongoing sting operation.

Meeting with the Mayor

R. Caruso and G. Plante relayed to the rest of the Commission what was discussed during their meeting with the Mayor; there has been an account set up for gifts, up to \$50,000. Jason Rosenberg had given the Commission a gift and can now be deposited and used towards projects or where they see fit. As opposed to the HP violations that are split between the Commission and the City, 60 (COD)/40(City) with the first \$40,000 going to the City. Placard violations are split 50/50 with City and State and there have been 10 violations in 4 months.

Meeting adjourned